Controls and Honest Life

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HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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SACRIFICIAL OFFERING OF LAND — I

(VINOBA'S SPEECH AT WARANGAL ON 29-5-'51)

[While the account of Vinobaji's Telangana tour has hardly begun to appear in *Harijan*, he has commenced another walking tour in the North. I had to choose between dropping the account of the Telangana tour and giving that of the new tour, and continuing the Telangana account, even at a snail's pace, regardless of Vinoba's "quick march" to the North. In consultation with Vinoba I have chosen the latter course. The Northern tour is a continuation of the Telangana tour, which saw the beginning of the Land-Gifts Mission. During that tour he explained day after day the objects and ideology behind the appeal for land-offerings, and the effect it produced on the minds of the people. The account will be helpful to prepare the minds of the people of the parts through which he will now be travelling for what is expected of them when he visits them, and also for initiating similar *yajnas* throughout the country.

But in publishing the Telangana account, I have for once deviated from the chronological order this week. Vinobaji's speech at Warangal was one of his most remarkable sermons and explained at length the genesis and basic conceptions behind the *Bhu-dan-yajna* (Land-Gifts Mission) movement. That speech has, therefore, been taken out of its order, and published first this week. Incidentally, it should be mentioned that the speech had been reported in full in the special number of the *Statesman* of 15th August last as a special article.

— K. G. M.]

Confluence of Cultures

Though humanity has been in existence for thousands of years, for centuries groups of men remained so unknown to one another, that they often believed that they were the only men living on the earth, owing to inadequate means of travelling and communication. The extent of the world was also imperfectly known. Events as catastrophic as the late Assam earthquake might happen in one part of the world without the people in another part becoming in the least aware of them. With the growth of knowledge, man's knowledge both of nature and of other groups of men increased. The contact was many-sided — physical, mental, religious, spiritual, cultural, political etc. It was not always happy. At times, it was very bitter. But, I believe, that on the whole, the result was good. Examples might be cited from all parts of the world. The confluence of the Aryans and the Dravidians in India is an example nearer home. It was a meeting of the mountain civilization of the North and the sea civilization of the South. They had lived unknown to one another for thousands of years. When they met, they had both war and peace, segregation and mixture. Both had their independently developed separate cultures. The Aryans were more intellectual and the Dravidians more devotional. Their confluence ultimately produced a big nation, in which the good points of both the North and the South were absorbed. But this new culture, too, later on proved to be imperfect.

In course of time came the Muslims with their own civilization, and there was a conflict between the old and this newcomer. The Muslim civilization in its expansion seems to have followed two different methods: one of violence and destruction, the other of love and construction. Gazni and Aurangzeb are examples of the first; Akbar and Kabir, those of the second.

But Islam filled a deficiency in the Indian culture. It regarded all men as equal. Although this principle was recognized in the *Upanishads*, it was not visible in our social order; the principle had not been acted upon. Islam put the principle into practice. The Indian culture, with its mutually exclusive castes, came into conflict with the casteless civilization of Islam, and history records the progress and the result of that conflict. None can say that Islam conquered India on the battlefield. But before the Muslim soldier came with his sword, the Muslim *fakir* (saint) had come with his teachings, and he wandered from village to village and gave a message which was attractive.

At the same time India also produced a number of preachers who attacked caste divisions and laid special emphasis on the unity of God. No doubt, Islam had a great share in it. It is a valuable contribution of Islam to Indian culture. Thus with the addition of Islam a new compound of Indian civilization was produced.

Then came the Europeans about three hundred years ago, attracted by the wealth of India and stimulated by the spirit of the Renaissance, which ultimately produced, among other things, the advance of modern science and the Industrial Revolution. As a matter of fact, at the time when the Europeans came here, India was far more ahead of Europe in science, industry, philosophy etc. She was also far more

prosperous. Once again the meeting of the two civilizations was both bitter and sweet. Indian civilization was tremendously affected, and in fact a new compound is in the process of formation. A new way of living and thinking has been introduced. The new thought-currents, like Socialism, Communism etc., have arrived from the West and they have come to stay.

Necessarily there is a struggle between the two. I believe that ultimately Indian culture will lose nothing thereby. The scum will be washed off, and a new compound culture will be produced. I say this because in spite of a great import of new ideas and knowledge from the West, India has not ceased to produce profound original teachers, thinkers and investigators all along. Of course, in the present formative stage, we witness both good and evil.

The Vamana Incarnation

Though I had not directly attended to the Communist problem of Hyderabad so far, ever since Gandhiji's death I have been watching it and keeping myself informed of its violent developments. I confess that incendiary and murderous activities, painful as they were, did not unnerve me, because I know that the birth of a new culture has always been accompanied with blood-baths in the past, and hence there is nothing new in it. What is needed is not to get panicky, but to keep our heads cool and find peaceful means of resolving the conflict.

The Government have kept a special police force in Telangana to restore peace. Policemen are not expected to think out and institute reforms. They can only use their arms and strike terror. If it were a question of clearing a forest of tigers, their employment would be quite useful. But here they have to deal with human beings, however mistaken and misguided. There is a new idea and a goal behind these activities, and where a new ideal is born mere repression cannot combat it. Not that the Government do not understand this; but they have a responsibility to protect life and property, and so I do not blame them for the measures employed by them.

But I had all along been seeking a better remedy. "चरैवेति" (*Charaiveti*) — Move on, say the Vedas; and I thought that a tour through the district was essential to seek it. But I wondered how I should do it. Thought develops during a tour. But the tour which does that is not the one undertaken in modern times through motor cars, railway trains and airplanes. In olden days horses and camels were considered to be the swiftest conveyances. They could cover as many as two hundred miles in a night in an emergency. But teachers like Buddha, Mahavir, Kabir, Nanak, Namdev, Chaitanya preferred to go on foot in order to deliver their messages far and wide. Thought becomes clear, mature and remodelled while you walk.

This happened to me as I walked to Shivarampalli from Wardha. All the way I was seeking a solution of the problem which the Communists tried to solve in their own way. One day, the story of the Vamana incarnation flashed through my mind, and Brahman that I was, I took it up it and commenced begging gifts of land.

(*To be concluded*)

SUBSTITUTE FOR ENGLISH

In the previous issue of the *Harijan* we saw how the Government of Bombay, in their letter to the Universities of the State, have argued that "it will be unsound educationally to continue English as the medium of instruction for University teaching subsequent to 1955." What then should be substituted for it? Government answer this question in their above mentioned letter in the following manner:

> "However, it is universally admitted that as University education is imparted in a foreign language, the ordinary level of popular education can never be raised."

None will demur to this, and will naturally expect that the major Indian languages of the land, which are spoken by crores of people, will obviously be named as the substitutes for English. Instead of this the letter goes in for a special pleading and says,

> "The fact that the national language is allied to the regional languages in the State and is derived mainly from the same source is a factor which distinguishes Hindi from English in this respect."

I do not know how far this philological opinion of Government is true or warranted. Is Kannada allied to Hindi? And which is the same source of the three main languages of the Bombay State? But we may not go into dissecting this special pleading, nor examine why it is done. It is resorted to to suggest a language other than the student's own, as medium of instruction, which is unnatural, viz. Hindi for higher education in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

A further argument for this culturally and educationally bad suggestion is given by Government as follows:

> "Besides, if, as provided in the Indian Constitution, Hindi is to replace English *in all the spheres of our national life* (italics mine), at the latest by 1965, the acceptance of Hindi as the medium of instruction for collegiate education appears to be one of the first steps in the direction of facilitating the change-over from English to Hindi."

I invite the reader to examine how far it is true to say that the Constitution of India provides for the replacement of English by Hindi "*in all the spheres of our national life*". The Constitution says, Hindi is to be the official language of the Union. It further says that the Legislature of a State may by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State.

Thus the Constitution of India definitely provides for the legitimate and proper use of the great Indian languages mentioned in its schedule VIII. There is absolutely no mention in the Constitution regarding the use of Hindi as the medium of instruction. This is a question that can only be decided, not by the administrative but mainly by the cultural, democratic and educational needs of our people. And as the President of the Union said recently at the Osmania University, looking to the fundamentals of our Constitution and "the language policy best calculated to serve the objectives we have in view", "all kind of education — primary, secondary and university — should be available to every linguistic group of any appreciable size in its own tongue."

The Government letter says at the end that this transformation should be effected smoothly, efficiently and expeditiously and it adds that it will be in the best interests of the community in general and of the student world in particular. This is obviously a questionable proposition. The letter envisages that the S. S. C. E. students in March 1955 will have studied Hindi for 7 years. But what about the teachers in higher education? How are they to do their work in Hindi which most of them do not know? The substitute that they have ready at hand at present is surely their own language. And surely the language of the student as the medium — that only and not the Hindi acquired in a manner within a few years — can be in his best interests. "In the circumstances," as the Radhakrishnan Report says (p. 321, para 47), "while national needs compel the recognition of Hindi (Hindustani) as India's Federal language, it is difficult to assign to it the role played by English." And as it further affirms, "From the point of view of education and of general welfare of a democratic community it is essential that their study should be through the instrumentality of their regional language." And from the mere point of immediacy and expediency also, it admits that "we recognize that in the near future the regional languages will be the principal media of instruction at all stages in all provinces." It is painful to see that the Government of Bombay did not recognize the force of all this and took the view which is neither in the best interests of the community in general nor the student world in particular, nor is it helpful to the growth of democracy and sound education in the State. Such a grave mistake is a dangerous thing, and if I may hazard a guess it is born of a too administrative view of the matter. But this brings us to a new point which I leave off here for separate treatment hereafter.

14-9-'51 M. P. DESAI

TO THE STUDENTS

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CORRUPTION AND ELECTIONS

[Shri P. M. Mani, the convener of the Kerala Round Table Group, Ernakulam, has sent copies of two resolutions passed by the group on 8-7-'51. As they are of general interest, I give below important extracts from them. — Ed.]

Resolution No. 4

"A declaration and practical demonstration should be made by right-thinking people that a life based on Truth *in every department* of life can be a practical, workable proposition on this earth."

The practice of collecting political funds needs more vigilant watching. Political propaganda in the form of newspapers, pamphlets etc., are highly commendable. The provision for public speeches before elections and the supply of agents at election booths have nothing wrong in them. But the candidates providing transport and paying money to influence voting is unmitigated corruption. Success at such a cost is not worth having. Because there is not sufficient public opinion against such corrupt practices, political funds are built up by questionable channels. A political party with Gandhiji as the ideal has no justification to tolerate, not even connive at, such practices. Public opinion is to be created that we shall not have candidates elected under such conditions."

"Labourers contributing fair amounts can build up party funds, commensurate with usual requirements; leaders are to resist temptations for any unfair pressure, and the public should be vigilant in the matter."

"Newspaper propaganda has considerably deteriorated in the country. Exaggerations and misrepresentations and indecent personal attacks have to be eradicated."

"In regard to admission to educational institutions, examinations and service selections, corruption has been definitely on the increase, with the advent of political parties and with the "increase" of education. The habit of approaching the examiners and the selecting authorities with a view to influencing them, has been developed in the most subtle ways. So, stern public opinion and drastic disciplinary action are called for, in all quarters. Rules made must be respected and not abused as a cover for favouritism towards Government servants, politicians and others who are able to exert personal influence."

"Controls have often become similarly items of disruption and corruption. In any case, permit-holders and contractors to Government should not be nominated as candidates and if they stand should not be supported by the electorate."

Resolution No. 11

"If the public are to support any nominees in the next election, the parties or local bodies are to insist on a written undertaking by the candidate —

(i) that he would spend at least 5 days in a month in the constituency, addressing the public bodies in the area and meeting them during weeks when the Assembly or its Committee, of which he is a member, is not in session; and

(ii) that he would resign within a week in case three-fourths of the elected *Panchayat* or Municipal members of the constituency in a meeting, after offering him a chance to explain any alleged misconduct or neglect, calls on him to resign. Notice may be given also for the above meeting to any party on whose ticket the candidate was elected.

"It is also stipulated that preference will be given to candidates who undertake to maintain truthfully in detail their election expenses and earnings as Assembly members or Ministers, including daily or travelling allowances, remunerations got for representations before Ministers and the Government on behalf of others, and place them before the public."

"We make an appeal before the first elections of New India that an earnest effort may be made to see that truth may prevail at all levels and in all departments of life including the political. India of Mahatma Gandhi should give the lead."

HARIJAN

Sept. 22 1951

CONTROLS AND HONEST LIFE

(By Shrikrishnadas Jaju)

A friend from Ranchi, in a letter to Shri Mashruwala, writes:

"You write in the course of an article ("The Congress Manifesto", *Harijan*, July 28, '51): 'It must be accepted even by de-controllists that the imposition of controls is no excuse for black markets and corrupt practices. Good citizenship and honest life require upright conduct and utmost attempt to abide by the law, however irksome it might appear, on the part of every citizen.' This is perfectly true. But how is one to abide by the laws which are too absurd and impracticable? Every one has to earn his bread, and discharge one's responsibility to the family. We have worked for two years and have reached the conclusion through experience that controls are the sole cause of the wide-spread corruption and moral degradation of our people. The primary responsibility for this unfortunate state of affairs rests on the Government. The people are led to resort to it under compulsion to meet their needs. I write this to you not out of any self-interest. I shall put before you a concrete example and leave it to you to judge.

"People earned their livelihood and supported their families, through agriculture, trade, service etc. even when India was not independent and we were ruled by the British and the second world war had not begun. There was not so much corruption then. People discriminated between right and wrong, between fair and unfair, and earned their livelihood honestly. Prices too were quite low. Corruption set in only after the war when the controls were imposed. Thenceforward a few people have certainly made too much money through unfair methods, in collusion with the officers; but the majority have been rendered helpless with no means to support their families as law-abiding citizens.

"In the Ranchi District, the Bihar Government has enforced the Monopoly Procurement and Food-grains Control Order from 25th Nov., 1949. It lays down that no person may sell more than a maund of rice or a maund and a half of paddy to anybody except a Government agent. The order applies to the Ranchi city also. Now, no rice is grown in the city, it has to come from the villages. The normal channel through which it reached the consumers in the city from the producers in villages was this: The villagers brought the rice in small baskets to the village market, where they sold it to small traders, called '*phadias*'. The *phadia* sold it to the carters and they brought it to the city in their carts and kept it in the *golas* (depots) of their agents. From the *golas* it was sold to the retailers of the city through the commission agents. The retailers in their turn, hawked it for sale in the *mohallas*, and thus every one was able to get the rice at his own door. The carters, having disposed of the rice, took back to the village markets other articles such as pulses, salt, cloth, oils, spices, etc. and thus made their livelihood, besides serving the people. They did it every week. But their living has been destroyed by the controls. A cart carries a load of about 20 mds. The above order forbids any one except a Government agent from selling or purchasing more than a maund of rice or a maund and a half of paddy. Now, tell me how is a man to make his livelihood and support his family and livestock? The poor illiterate villager can neither voice his grievances nor is there any among our leaders, or Government officials to listen to them.

"I may refer to one more matter in this connection. A few people contemplate protesting against the Government order by carrying on the rice-trade in the open markets while assuring the Government of all its due taxes; but the Government officers put in obstacles, thereby encouraging clandestine and dishonest trade."

This is an important matter, and deserves serious consideration. First, let us consider why the Government is led to make such detailed and complicated laws which result in so much inconvenience to thousands of people. If people show readiness to abide honestly by a few fundamental principles of conduct and law there would be no need to frame very strict laws. Thousands of prisoners live in a jail but very few try to escape. Still the jail rules and regulations have to be framed with an eye to the most dangerous of them. The result is that all prisoners, good and bad, have to suffer hardships. In the case of control rules, we find that people actually try to circumvent these laws. How much blame can we then lay on the Government? If we can assure them that their plan will work well, and people will co-operate with them honestly, I think the Government could be made to enact such rules as would cause the least hardship to the people. It is our duty, therefore, to render such help to the Government.

The British Government wanted to crush our nationalist movement. Hence they issued such offensive orders as attendance at the Police station etc. They were meant for humiliating the people or getting some excuse to send them to jails. They created new offences through arbitrary laws. It was the duty of the people to defy those laws. But now we have our own Government. There is no conflict between the interests of the people and those of the Government. Normally the laws are made to serve the interests of the people as the Government understand them. Therefore we cannot think of infringing them lightly. Nevertheless, there are instances which disturb our equanimity. Difficulties like those pointed out by the correspondent and others of the same class exist in many places and people ask for guidance. While we cannot advise infringement of laws, yet we admit that in such cases observance of law is very difficult. It is an intriguing question; especially where it is evident that the mistake lies with the Government. The Government, at times, in their obdurate insistence on implementing particular economic policies do not take into account their effects on the comforts and livelihood of the masses. The ban on the manufacture of *gur* by *kolhu* imposed last year is an instance of that type. Then, there are officials who are led into passing unreasonable orders out of ignorance or under the influence of advisors who misguide them. At times corrupt subordinates help the infringement of good laws or use them for harassing the public or favouring friends and bribers. Government themselves at

times create situations where people have no alternative but to evade the law. Some time back, they controlled the prices of gram. Many people felt that it was unnecessary. Even if it was necessary, they should have controlled simultaneously the prices of gram pulse also. But this was not done. Gram is mostly used in the form of pulse, and it is quite easy to change the former into the latter. The result was that gram continued to be sold at higher prices in the black market, and pulse correspondingly at a still higher price in the open market. Traders openly purchased gram pulse at those high prices. By the time the article reached the place where it was to be actually sold, the Government had issued another control order and fixed the price of pulse on the basis of their prices for gram. The traders stood to lose, at the minimum, a third of their investments. No wonder then, that instead of going into bankruptcy they resorted to selling the commodity in the black market and tried to save their social status and themselves from economic ruin. This is not the only case of its kind. Instances can be quoted where the prices of an article at both ends, — at the point of production, and at that of sale where it is carried at some expense — are the same. How can one carry on trade under such conditions ?

Ordinary traders regard the fluctuation of prices to be the established custom of trade. The prices vary according as the demand goes up or down. One may justly find fault with a trader who is after excessive profits. But how can any blame attach to him who is merely earning enough for his livelihood ? Some even argue that this breach of law is wrong only legally, but is not so morally ; hence, there is no unrighteousness in its infringement. But we must realize that even these laws are designed for the good of society : and hence it is improper and immoral to infringe them.

However, the problem, what is one to do where there is no alternative but to break the law, still remains. Well, I shall say, one may infringe the law if the situation is exasperating, but one should be prepared to suffer its consequences. Defiance of the law and avoidance of the consequences, that is, defiance of law under conditions of secrecy, is quite wrong. It is cowardly and hence immoral to resort to secrecy to serve one's convenience even though the convenience in question may be justifiable. If it is necessary to infringe the law, it should be done openly and the infringer must be prepared for the suffering that it may entail. The ordinary man will not be prepared to accept this advice ; but the morally sensitive and the brave should have the courage to take this step. This courageous step may influence the Government officials to modify or withdraw their erroneous orders.

Such perplexing questions will often crop up in the course of the Honest Life Movement. It seems that ultimately a few good and honest people may have to take recourse to Satyagraha. Satyagraha raises other questions such as the fitness to offer it, as also the particular problem on which it should be offered. These may be considered if and when the occasion arises. Those who think of resorting to it will seek guidance from proper quarters. But in the interest of moral principles, it is necessary that, in case those who feel concerned about the growing corruption in the country feel called upon to disobey the law, they should do so overtly and not covertly.

Sevagram, 31-8-'51

(From the original Hindi)

(*Note* : Shri Jajuji has hinted at the possibility of a case for Satyagraha, and of the conditions precedent for it. Let me urge that the Honest Life Movement is a necessary condition precedent. The only sanction for a successful Satyagraha movement is the meticulous honesty of the Satyagrahi and the righteousness of the cause. Before any step of the nature of Satyagraha can be contemplated, it would be necessary to make every attempt to have the grievances redressed by other lawful means. A demand for redress can succeed if it is made by a body of persons, who have a reputation to lose, and of whom it can be said with confidence that they are honest men. Hence the necessity for all people who want to lead an honest life to form local associations, and to help one another in their daily occupations and to act as keepers of one another's conscience. — K. G. M.)

13-9-'51

NEED FOR RE-ORIENTATION OF EDUCATION

(*By B. G. Kher*)

[The following is the speech delivered by Shri B. G. Kher, Bombay's Chief Minister, while declaring open the new Art and Craft Wing of the H. D. High School, Sholapur, on 3-7-'51.]

Stating that the Bombay Government had given an important place to social, cultural and craft activities in the secondary education programme, the Chief Minister said :

" Each nation must evolve its own national system of education. There can be no real progress unless our educational workers and institutions go ahead with a new vision. We cannot borrow ready-made systems of education. This new vision has been given to us by the Father of Our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. He found that mere mastery of the academic syllabus was of no use to our children. They must become more practical and creative and capable men and women of character."

" One would naturally ask the question whether there is need for including art and craft in the secondary schools curriculum. The old English schools opened in our country by our former rulers had an entirely different outlook from our own. People took to English education

because first that improved their financial position and status and, therefore, there was a rush for the black-coated professions. But our national leaders realized even then that the education provided to our children was unsuitable for the needs and aspirations of the country and did not make them self-reliant, independent, fearless citizens.

Need for a New Vision

"All the world over, modern education gave a very important place to activity in school long ago while in our schools it was only cramming which mattered and education was entirely divorced from life. It did not produce men of initiative, enterprise, ability and character; but created, as we used to say, a slave mentality. We had to leave the old formal stereotyped and timid approach following this prescribed pattern and make a new approach by blazing a new trail.

A Fruitful Channel of Expression

"One of the main educational reforms in advanced countries is the introduction of craft in school. It has been a recognized principle of modern education, for many decades now, that practical and constructive work makes an extremely powerful appeal to children and youth. Practical work gives fruitful channels of expression to the inherent buoyant mental and physical energy, which would otherwise express itself in unhealthy channels. You will find that in your own class-room there are some children who are 'difficult' as you call them Give them some project to complete which will rouse their interest. Introduce some craft work in your class and you will find that they will generally respond far beyond your expectations. In spite of the experience of the psychologists and educationists in regard to the advantages of craft work, we had not exploited this particular avenue of education for a long time. Even UNESCO has recently advised all nations to the same effect.

It Makes Them Practical People

"Craft work affords valuable opportunities for observation and reacts favourably on intellectual centres. It has been found that children not having a higher intelligence quotient would also show better progress than they otherwise do if they are given some activity. Besides, introduction of craft makes them more practical people. Craft work to be really beneficial must be introduced in its true spirit and with seriousness. If it is introduced in small unstimulating doses, it will become a subject of the syllabus which is mechanically taught and it will not have served its purpose. It must be stimulating to the intellect of our boys and girls, and the challenging constructive project must change their entire attitude and personality.

"In order to irradiate education with vigour and the real joy of life, it is essential that we should provide for our children opportunities for doing real work and experiencing a sense of achievement of having created something of utility and value. Let not the curriculum be conceived as a collection of subjects but as a combination of play activities, projects and constructive work. Craft work is necessary for creating a sense of the dignity of labour and giving full scope to the creative abilities of the children. It was Bernard Shaw who said, 'The yearning of our children in the industrial districts to escape from the schools to the factory is not caused by lighter tasks or shorter hours in the factory nor altogether by the temptation of wages nor even the desire for novelty but by the dignity of adult work, and exchange of the humiliating liability to personal slight from the lawless schoolmaster from which the grown-ups are free, for the stern but dignified pressure of necessity to which all flesh is subject."

"I think there is a lot of truth in what Shaw has stated. The main point to bear in mind is the educative and productive aspect of craft which under no circumstances should be neglected. Craft education is not for show or exhibition but for real education and also for helping progress in other subjects.

Education of Art

"What is true of craft is more or less true of art also. Art education in schools should also not be divorced from life and the other school subjects. For the purpose of selecting crafts educationally, socially and economically suitable and practicable for the first three standards of the secondary schools, the Government appointed a Committee and this Committee has recommended nine crafts in addition to the three basic ones. For these crafts teachers will have to be trained and the Government is conducting some short-term training courses for the teachers of the Government and non-Government schools at five centres. I hope your school has already deputed teachers and got them trained.

"Craft work is only one part of the comprehensive reforms in the secondary education. Here the children should get some guidance and help to find their own aptitude. Here they will get the understanding of their obligations as citizens of an independent country. Here they must develop and build a good physique and a sportsmanlike team-spirit by plenty of games and here they should learn through actual experience the responsibilities of community life. Here also they should find through art and music some expression of and satisfaction to their emotions and ideas.

"All these, fostered with sincerity and intelligence and discipline, are character-building activities which will give a moral and strong foundation to the students by creating an atmosphere and raising the tone of the school which are sure to have a powerful and unconscious effect on the pupils."

PANNAI ASHRAM NOTES
II

Long-Term Programmes

After the opening ceremony of the well was over, the whole party adjourned to the shade of a mango tree when Kumarappaji explained to them the place that the long-term activities, like digging wells, planting trees, and erection of public buildings, have in a village economy. He pointed out that man invariably hankers after immortality. Immortality need not necessarily mean living for all time in the physical sense. It can well be the projection of ourselves beyond the physical span of life in the shape of service we render to generations yet unborn. He pointed out that the well that has just been inaugurated, no doubt, gave all who were present today refreshing water during the hot hours, but it will continue to do so, maybe, for decades after most of us are no more. In that way, if after a 100 years from now some thirsty wayfarer quenches his thirst we shall be credited with the merit of the service rendered to him also. He said, "We do not know who planted this mango tree under which we are sitting. It is a very old tree which may well be over 80 years old. But it gives us shelter even now, and, in so far as the deed of the planter of the tree provides shelter for men, monkeys and birds, we bless the one who took the initiative in planting this tree. This view of life is the customary traditional one in our culture. There are many things we do for our own benefit, but there are certain things which we perform from a long-range viewpoint. For instance, we have planted tomato plants in this field. We hope to have the benefit of these in the next two or three months. This is a short-range viewpoint. Most of our actions are like this. But life will not be complete unless we have also some long-range activities like the digging of this well or the planting of this mango tree. We do not know whether the one who planted this tree ever enjoyed its fruit himself, but he has our blessings. Hence we should all take part not only in items that bring us immediate benefit but also in work that is bound to benefit the community at large. There are many things in village life which have brought about suffering because of our failure to attend to such acts as these.

"In former days rich farmers built *dharmashalas*, tanks, roads, drinking-water troughs for cattle for public use. The wealth of the village was thus enjoyed by the farmer himself or by the other villagers. In this way the immediate needs as well as the future benefits were provided for. At the present time, with the impact of Western ideas of high standards of living, by which they mean consuming as much wealth as a person can lay hold on, they have increased our desire for the quantity of things that we can use in our daily lives. A rich farmer today does not build *dharmashalas* or repair tanks but goes in for a cheap secondhand motor car and tries to spend all the wealth he produces on himself. The result is the wealth of the village is sent either to foreign countries or to some of our big towns. This impoverishes the village people. In building a tank, a good many of the villagers found occupation. That meant that the food grains etc. grown in the village by the rich farmer were used to feed the villagers. But now to buy a motor car he sends those grains to a nearby town to sell and with the proceeds buys his car. We can well see how this change in the life and activities of the richer people has led to the impoverishment of the villagers."

In the end, Kumarappaji appealed to the villagers to think of the whole village as their charge and do all that the village requires with their own effort and not think of their narrow interest only and expect the Government to meet the public need.

Corporate Feeding

When the villagers were invited and the question arose as to whether we should prepare food for those who were coming from afar, Kumarappaji said they must be asked to bring their noon-day meal with them, as the Ashram would not be able to provide their food for various reasons. Therefore, quite a number of the villagers had brought their tiffin with them. We ourselves had provided for our members some *dal bhat* (pulse and rice). Kumarappaji suggested that all the food brought by everybody should be pooled together and distributed evenly as a great many had not brought their food with them and a large number of the village Harijan children who had come to see this gathering had also to be fed. The people were asked to sit in rows and were provided with leaf plates and the food thus collected was distributed, the Harijan children being fed first. The result was that everybody had an enjoyable *vanabhojan* (picnic) of various dainty dishes and was more than satisfied. The Ashram could thus satisfy fifty people with food prepared for five. One simple suggestion from Kumarappaji solved a ticklish problem. Economy was respected without marring the grace of the ceremonial occasion. It was remarked that this feeding was reminiscent of the miracle recorded in the Bible of Jesus feeding the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes! (where everybody was fed sumptuously and several baskets of remaining food were gathered). Though the Ashram has no facility to feed the gathering of such large numbers from distant parts in the middle of the day it became possible by mutual co-operation and goodwill to bring about by a comparatively simple method, the satisfaction of everybody's need sumptuously.

R. R.

(To be continued)

THE HINDI OF THE CONSTITUTION

(By Ghanashyam Sinha Gupta)

I have read carefully Shri M. P. Desai's article in the *Harijan* of 23rd June, 1951. I can at once say that I entirely agree with him that the Hindi of the Constitution has to be (as I have often termed it) *sarvadeshik* and not *pradeshik* spoken either at Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad or Raipur. It has to be all-embracing, drawing freely from all the great languages of India to enrich itself. That is the only key to disarm opposition and to bring about uniformity of terminology, for all the great State languages of India. This uniformity is essential if India is to function as one united nation. The terms (having any technical significance) to be in use, whether in Courts or Colleges, must be the same for all our languages; otherwise there will be chaos and confusion. Our technical term must convey the same idea in Hindi, Marathi, Bengalee and other Indian languages. This is the line in which Hindi has to grow and that is the directive contained in Article 351.

It was indeed in the spirit of this directive that the personnel of the Committee for preparing the Hindi version of the Constitution was composed. This Hindi Committee included eminent scholars of other languages. Of the seven members (excluding the Chairman) five were experts of other languages, Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Professors Y. R. Date, Shri M. Satyanarayan, Justice W. R. Puranik and Professor M. Mujeeb (who subsequently left the committee). Besides this a conference of experts (forty-five in number) of all the languages given in Schedule VIII was called to finally approve the terms to be used for the Hindi translation of the Constitution, on the basis of the greatest common

measure of acceptability to all the languages. The terms so approved were used in the Hindi translation of the Constitution. It is, therefore, the concrete sample of the directive in Article 351 in its actual working and should be taken as the model for future development of Sarvadeshik Hindi. Any book, whatever its worth, which rejects this model can have no claim to Sarvadeshik or National Hindi.

The Hindi-Hindustani controversy has fortunately ended finally and it would not serve any useful purpose to rake it. But I must try to remove what I consider to be the misunderstanding regarding it in the argument of Shri Desai. Hindustani in Article 351 is not the Sarvadeshik Hindi or to put it in his own words "Hindi named in Article 351". The Hindi of Article 351 and the 'Hindustani' occurring therein cannot mean the same thing. That will make absurd reading of that Article. You have only to substitute the word *Hindi* for *Hindustani* in Article 351 to see the absurdity. The word *Hindustani* is used in Rule 30 of the Constitutent Assembly Rules, as a generic term for both Hindi and Urdu. Hindustani means the local mixture of Hindi and Urdu spoken in ordinary parlance in and round about Delhi and some other places. It definitely does not connote the national language either of the present or in the making as envisaged in Article 351 of the Constitution.

(Note: I am rather unwilling to carry on the controversy of the form and name of the common language. Scholars are one of the major factors in the moulding of a language; popular writers and the masses who speak the languages are another major factor. Sometimes the former and sometimes the latter prevail over the other; at times, both stay side by side. The most popular and widely read writer or composer contributes a very large share in shaping the language. Even his wrong usuages become established and cannot be dislodged by scholars and scientists.

Even in terminologies, though uniformity is valuable and should be secured as much as possible, that factor alone should not be stressed too much; and even carefully coined words might prove inaccurate or inconvenient some time later. Moreover exact scientific terms are often too long and pedantic for constant use even in scientific books and a short conventional names that can be popularly used have to be given to several things. The words organic and inorganic chemistry, and positive and negative electricity are instances of scientific terms which came to be regarded as inaccurate later on. But they have become handy and the new words, 'chemistry of carbon compounds and non-carbon compounds', and cathode and anode are unable to dislodge them. Innumerable carbon compounds cannot be called by their full technical names even as George VI cannot be called by all his Christian names. Their nicknames become standard names. And we know that the latset fashion is to refer to them by their initials only as UN, AINEC, AICC etc. All the scholars of India may have unanimously approved वित्तीय for 'financial', and all the Gujarati grammarians will doubtlessly regard नाणाकीय as absolutely corrupt, but वित्तीय may not be able to dislodge नाणाकीय from the current vocabulary of Gujarati. त्रिच्छतीय is certainly wrong grammar, but in Gujarati one who uses अेषणीय will be regarded a pedant. Languages do not follow the law of geometrical figures. Let us all try to achieve the best, but not quarrel over or worry too much if it takes hybrid, corrupt or multiple forms now and then.

It seems unnecessary to hairsplit about the interpretation of the word *Hindi* in Article 351. Who will draw the boundary line between the so-called Sarvadeshik and Pradeshik forms of Hindi? Will it be possible to compile a grammar or dictionary of Sarvadeshik Hindi without the help of those of the Pradeshik Hindi? And will the writers of Pradeshik Hindi be able to boycott a good book written by a writer of Sarvadeshik Hindi or Hindustani? We might introduce hundreds of Indian words in the English language. But can we say that the Oxford Dictionary and Nesfield's Grammar are no authorities to us? Similarly Pradeshik Hindi will have to be accorded a place of honour in the developement of Sarvadeshik Hindi.— K. G. M.)

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